



CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ITEM # 3

MAY 2003 AGENDA

SUBJECT:

Seminar: High School Exit Exams in Other States

	ACTION
X	INFORMATION
	PUBLIC HEARING

RECOMMENDATION:

Hear a seminar presentation on high school exit exams in other states.

Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action.

California's high school exit exam is one of many such exams in the United States. The California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) was first administered in 2002. Students in the class of 2004 are required to pass the CAHSEE as one condition of receiving a high school diploma. The State Board of Education has previously reviewed and approved the exam content and set the cut points for passage of the CAHSEE.

Summary of Key Issue(s).

As high school exit exams are implemented throughout the United States, educators, students, parents, and policy makers have responded with both support and opposition.

Fiscal Analysis (as appropriate).

N/A

Background Information Attached to this Agenda Item.

Attachment 1: States Conducting Student Competency Testing for High School Graduation (Exit Exams)

Additional information will be provided in the supplemental agenda.



Assessment and Secondary Education

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States Conducting Student Competency Testing for High School Graduation (Exit Exams)

(August 2000)

Under revision December 2002

When students graduate from high school, the public expects that each student will possess the skills to be successful at either work or postsecondary education. We know, however, that not all students meet this expectation. In an effort to increase the numbers of well-prepared young adults, nearly all states have set standards that describe what students should know and be able to do. The logical next question is, "Have students met those standards?" or "What do they know?" And then, "How will we measure what they know?" To answer these questions, some states have made a diploma contingent upon the demonstration of knowledge and skills. Some require students to pass a single "exit exam," while others require students to pass "end-of-course" tests. Still others require proficiency on sets of particular standards such as math or English.

High School Exit Exams (27 states)

States that require students to pass an assessment with a minimum score in order to graduate

State	Notes	Citation
Alabama	The class of 2002 was required to pass the reading and language sections of the graduation exam; the class of 2003 also must pass the math and science sections; the class of 2004 also must pass social studies.	Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-4-2-.02
Alaska	Effective for the class of 2004, students must pass a competency exam in reading, writing and math.	Alaska Stat. § 14.03.075
Arizona	The class of 2006 must pass tests in reading, writing and math.	ARIZ. ADMIN. CODE R7-2-302
California	The class of 2004 must pass the exit exams in English language arts and math to graduate. Students could take the exam in grade 9 in 2000-01. The board must study the [potential] appropriateness of other criteria by which a student who fails the test may earn a diploma, including exemplary grades and alternative tests of equal rigor, (Cal. Educ. Code § 60856).	Cal. Educ. Code § 60851

State	Notes	Citation
Delaware	State assigns weights to scores on the grade 10 reading, writing and math tests under the Delaware Student Testing Program. These weights are calculated to determine a “diploma index.” Beginning with the class of 2004, only students who attain a diploma index of at least 3.0 may earn a standard diploma. Students who meet other requirements but who do not attain a 3.0 on the diploma index are to be awarded a basic diploma. Beginning with the class of 2006, performance on the grade 11 Delaware Student Testing Program assessments in science and social studies also must be included in the student’s diploma index.	14 Del. C. § 152
Florida	All 11th-grade students must pass a high school competency test in reading, writing and math. Students enrolling as 9th-graders in 1999-2000 and later (the class of 2002 and thereafter) must pass the 10th-grade assessment test instead of the high school competency test. “In establishing passing scores [for these tests], the state board shall consider any possible negative impact of the test on minority students.”	Fl. Stat. ch. 229, § 57
Georgia	A curriculum-based test is administered in 11th-grade “for graduation purposes.” The graduation test will be replaced with end-of-course assessments when they are developed.	Ga. Code Ann. § 20-2-281
Indiana	Beginning with the class of 2000, each student must pass a graduation exam to graduate, unless the principal certifies that the student will complete the Core 40 curriculum (§ 20-10.1-5.70-1), or meet several other, fairly stringent requirements (grades, attendance, teacher recommendations, etc.).	Ind. Code § 20-10.1-16-13
Louisiana	Language arts, writing and mathematics tests are administered in 10th-grade, science and social studies in the 11th-grade.	La. Admin. Code § 2.099.00
Maryland	Exit exam covers math, reading, writing, citizenship, arts and physical education, the “World of Work” and “Survival Skills,” but only at basic levels. They will be replaced with end-of-course exams in English, government, algebra, geometry and biology. Students entering 9th-grade in 2003 will be required to pass those end-of-course exams to graduate.	Md. Regs. Code title 13A, § 03.02.03
Massachusetts	All 10th-grade students must take tests in math, science and technology, history and social science and English. Starting with the class of 2003, all students must pass the math and English tests to graduate. In coming years, passing the other tests will also become requirements for graduation.	Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 69, § 1D Mass. Regs. Code title 603, § 30.03
Minnesota	Students must pass the Basic Skills test in reading, writing and math. The class of 2002 also must meet “High Standards” in 24 of 48 content standards from 10 Learning Areas.	Minn. Statute § 120B.02 Minn. R. 3501.0040, 3501.0230
Mississippi	Requires mastery of “minimum academic skills as measured by assessments developed and administered by the State Board of Education.”	Miss. Code Ann. § 37-16-7
Nevada	Test covers reading, writing, math and science.	Nev. Rev. Stat. § 389.015
New Jersey	Requirements include passing an assessment and demonstrating skills in areas identified by the state board of education other than those covered in the assessment tests.	N.J. Rev. Stat. § 18A:7C-2

State	Notes	Citation
New Mexico	Test includes reading, English, math, science and social science. Students leaving high school may take the exam within five years and still receive a diploma.	N.M. Stat. Ann. § 22-2-8.4
New York	<p>New York State Board of Regents is phasing in a schedule under which all students will have to pass the Regents exams to graduate, beginning with the class of 2000. Students must achieve a minimum score of 65 on the exams unless their district requests a 55 for the first few years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class of 2000 – English • Class of 2001 – English, math • Class of 2002 – English, math, U.S. History, Global History • Class of 2003 – All previous curricular areas plus science • Class of 2004 – All previous areas, except students must score at least 55 in math and science • Class of 2005 – All previous areas with a minimum score of 65 	N.Y. Comp. Codes R. & Regs. title 8, § 100.5
North Carolina	Effective with the graduating class of 2001, all students must pass a computer skills test, to be administered in the 8th-grade. Effective with the graduating class of 2003, all students must pass basic competency exit exams, to be administered in the 11th-grade.	<p>N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-12</p> <p>N.C. Admin. Code title 16, r. 6D.0103</p>
Ohio	Includes math, reading, writing, science and citizenship.	Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3313.61
Pennsylvania	According to the state department of education Web site, "Requirements [for graduation from high school] shall include ... results of local assessments aligned with the academic standards. Beginning in the school year 2002-03, students must demonstrate performance at the proficient level or better in reading, writing and mathematics on <u>either</u> the State assessments administered in grade 11 or 12 <u>or</u> local assessments aligned with academic standards <u>or</u> both. The local school district's board of directors must decide whether it will use the PSSA, its own local assessments or both as one of its graduation requirements. The only requirement that the Commonwealth mandates is, at a minimum, that students perform at the proficient level or better in reading, writing and mathematics in order to graduate. The methods used to make this determination remain the decision of the local school board."	
South Carolina	Exam covers reading, writing and math.	S.C. Code Ann. § 59-30-10
Tennessee	Beginning with the 2001 freshman class, students must pass end-of-course tests in English II, Algebra I and Biology instead of a single exam.	Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-6001
Texas	Exit-level assessments include English, math, social studies and science.	Tex. Educ. Code Ann. § 39.025
Utah	Effective with the graduating class of 2005. The test must include at least language arts, reading and math.	Utah Code Ann. § 53A-1-611, amended in H.B. 177 (Utah 2000)

State	Notes	Citation
Virginia	All students must pass a literacy test to graduate. Students graduating in 2004, 2005 or 2006 must pass 6 end-of-course exams, 2 in English and 4 student-selected. Students graduating in 2007 and later may select only one subject; the remaining 3 must be in history, science and math. (Those subject-matter requirements were applied to all students in the previous regulation.) Other tests, including the SAT II, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exams, TOEFL and others may substitute for the end-of-course exams.	Va. Code Ann. § 22.1-253.13:4 8 Va. Regs. Reg. § 20-131-50
Washington	Students must pass test before being issued “certificate of mastery,” which is required for graduation starting with class of 2006.	Wash. Laws § 28A.655.060
Wisconsin	By September 1, 2004, every local board is required to establish criteria for awarding a high school diploma, criteria which must include the student’s score on the locally adopted high school graduation exam.	§ 118.30

Exit Exams Barred or Repealed (2 states)

State	Notes	Citation
Hawaii	The Hawaii Department of Education has placed a moratorium on its exit exam, effective with the class of 2000, so that a new assessment system based on Hawaii’s new performance standards may be developed. The old exam, developed in 1977, was not aligned with the new standards, was insufficiently rigorous and was entirely multiple-choice in format. The new exam is expected to be first administered in 2002 to the 10th-grade.	No citation
Missouri	A statute forbids exit exams: “In no case shall the state board of education or any other state agency establish any single test or group of tests as a condition or requirement for high school graduation or as a requirement for a state-approved diploma.”	Mo. Rev. Stat. § 160.570

Variations on Exit Exams (4 states)

State	Notes	Citation
Arkansas	Students in grade 11 must take end-of-course tests in Algebra I and Geometry, as well as a Literacy Exam. No information, however, could be located suggesting that every student must attain a passing score on these tests to graduate from high school.	
Connecticut	All 10th-graders must take a mastery examination. The results of this assessment must be one of the criteria but may not be the sole criteria to determine whether a student may graduate from high school.	§ 10-14n and § 10-223a
Michigan	Students must score above a certain level in mandatory state assessments (in communication, math, science and social studies) to gain state endorsement in that area. The scores and any endorsements earned appear on each student’s transcript. Students need not gain state endorsement in any area to graduate, but if a student does not receive one of the endorsements, a district staff member and the student must meet “to determine an educational program for the pupil designed to have the pupil achieve state endorsement in each area in which he or she did not achieve state endorsement.”	Mich. Comp. Laws § 380.1279

State	Notes	Citation
Oklahoma	<p>To graduate, students must take end-of-instruction tests in English (starting in 2000-01), U.S. history (2000-01), biology (2001-02) and algebra (2001-02), but do not have to pass the tests. Results are recorded on transcripts.</p> <p>“It is the intent of the Legislature that... the performance data and any available research shall be reviewed for consideration of additional consequences, including, but not limited to, high school graduation.”</p>	70 Okla. Stat. title 70, § 1210.508

Endorsed/Honors Diplomas (5 states)

States that award special diplomas, in part, for performance on exit exams that is better than merely adequate. (See also ECS StateNote “Differentiated Diplomas.”)

State	Notes	Citation
Arizona	To earn an honors endorsement, students must show an “extraordinary level of knowledge, skill and competency” in math, English, science and social studies.	Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 15-1626
Massachusetts	<p>Students may earn a “Certificate of Mastery” by meeting criteria that vary depending on a student’s performance on skills assessments. Those criteria may include superior performance on advanced placement tests or various awards.</p>	<p>Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 69, § 1D</p> <p>Mass. Reg. Code title 603, § 31.04</p>
New York	<p>Students entering 9th-grade in 2000-01 and before may earn a Regents diploma (rather than a local diploma) by meeting more stringent requirements for courses and Regents exam scores. For students entering 9th-grade in 2001-02 and thereafter, all students must meet requirements for Regents diplomas.</p> <p>To earn a Regents diploma with honors, a student must achieve an average of 90% in all Regents examinations required for the diploma.</p>	N.Y. Comp. Codes R. & Reg. title 8, § 100.5
Ohio	To earn a diploma with honors, students must maintain a 3.5 GPA, and either earn certain proficiency test scores as designated by the state board, or earn a 27 on the ACT (or the equivalent on the SAT), as well as meet certain course requirements.	<p>Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3313.61</p> <p>Ohio Admin. Code § 3301-13-07</p>
Virginia	Beginning with the class of 2002, students may earn an Advanced Studies Diploma by passing more end-of-course exams or their substitutes (9 rather than 6,) and taking more courses.	<p>Va. Code Ann. § 22.1-253.13:4</p> <p>8 Va. Regs. Reg. § 20-131-50</p>

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